

## Designing for Sound

The demand for acoustical solutions in architecture and design continues to expand, driven by sustainability goals, wellness initiatives, and evolving workplace needs.

Designers are seeking products that do more than just absorb sound, they want acoustical solutions that are visually appealing, eco-friendly, and adaptable to a wide range of projects.



### Acoustical Product Categories in A+D Lookup

Acoustical products are now organized into three clear categories to streamline the specification process:

- Acoustical Ceiling Baffle Clouds
- Acoustical Pods
- Acoustical Wall Panels and Tiles

This structure helps designers quickly locate and compare products across a crowded marketplace.

### How Designers Choose

Despite the wealth of options, product familiarity and representation remain critical. Designers often begin with online searches, then move to manufacturer libraries to confirm finish options. *Factors like color availability, price transparency, and design flexibility strongly influence final decisions.*

### One designer noted:

*"I've been specifying a lot of **Soelberg** lately, they're more affordable than competitors and **will do any custom color you want for just \$50.** That's incredibly cost-effective."*

### Reps also remain essential to product adoption, as one designer explained:

*"We rely on our reps to show us what's out there. **If we don't see it through a rep, we may not feel comfortable specifying it.**"*

As the acoustical product market continues to grow, the winners will be those who balance sustainability, affordability, design versatility, and strong rep support.

With designers increasingly focused on wellness and green building outcomes, acoustical solutions are no longer secondary, they're central to shaping environments where people can thrive!

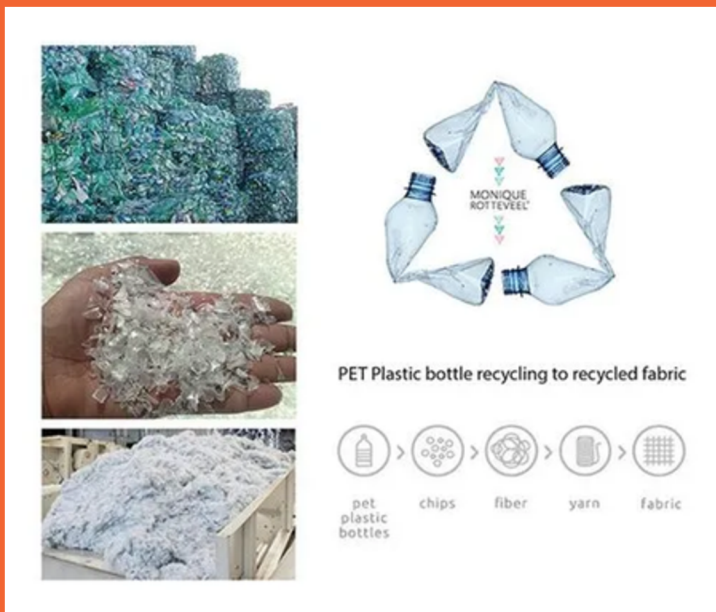




### Market Dynamics: New Players and Shifting Strategies

The acoustical product category is growing rapidly. Companies like **Slalom Acoustical & Partition Systems** have recently entered the system, joining established brands in what is already a highly competitive space. At the same time, suppliers such as **Ritz** are innovating with new sample towers, though without dedicated reps, they're relying heavily on direct-from-warehouse distribution.

Emerging brands like **Mode Acoustic** are also entering the conversation, adding fresh options for designers while raising the bar for aesthetics and functionality.



### Sustainability Front and Center

A major trend shaping acoustical design is sustainability. Many felt panels, particularly those made from PET felt, are produced using recycled plastic bottles, a shift that supports the circular economy and aligns with the industry's growing emphasis on green building certifications such as LEED and WELL.

Designers are increasingly drawn to acoustical products that combine performance with eco-friendly attributes. According to DataHorizon Research, this sustainable focus is a key driver of the category's growth.

### Beyond Acoustics: Added Benefits

Today's felt acoustic panels offer advantages beyond sound control, including:

- **Easy installation:** Lightweight, often secured with adhesives or simple fasteners.
- **Durability:** Resistant to wear and tear, long-term value.
- **Safety:** Many products are fire-resistant, supporting code compliance.
- **Well-being:** Improved acoustics foster focus, reduce stress, and enhance productivity.

